

2003 HARVEST CELEBRATION FARM TOUR

Where does our food come from? How does it get to us? Many people around Puget Sound are discovering they can answer these questions by learning about their **foodshed**. This concept describes how food flows from production to consumption in the local and regional food supply system. Thinking about our foodshed allows us to look closely at the consumer choices we make every day and doing our best to eat within our foodshed insures that King County farms have a prosperous future.



For the 5th year in a row, the annual Harvest Celebration Farm Tour provided people just such an opportunity to discover the easy availability of local produce in King County. On October 4, 2003, twenty-one farms in King County extended an open invitation to the public to come experience the productivity and abundance of the county's small-acreage, diversified agriculture. Farms in both north and south King County as well as on Vashon Island were featured.

HARVEST CELEBRATION PRIORITY GOALS:

- Increase public awareness and appreciation for local agriculture and food systems
- Showcase the productivity of small-acreage, diversified farms in King County
- Raise awareness of the threatened state of agricultural lands in King County
- Educate the public to vote for local farms with their food dollar

The 2003 Farm Tour saw more than 4,000 people visiting the many different farms, despite a wet morning and grey day. People had the opportunity to experience local vegetable and fruit production, pick their own pumpkins, pet sheep, alpacas and other livestock, press their own cider, run through a corn maze or take a hayride.

Visitors to Lewis Irwin Farm cattle ranch, a new addition to the tour this year, watched demonstrations of fittings for show animals and were encouraged to take a walking tour through the pastures and along Newaukum Creek, a salmon bearing stream running through the property.

Over 50% of this year's visitors were urban residents, highlighting the urban-rural connections made during the farm-tour. Additionally, 70% of the farmers that returned our survey reported that they have had an increase in visitors to their farms due to the success of this year's Harvest Celebration.



Livestock lend a hand at Fall City Farm
Photo S. Kantor

This year's tour featured several special events.

WSU Research Farms

This year five farms on the tour participated in WSU research projects involving water quality and/or ditch maintenance. Attendees had the chance to see the various projects and talk with Extension Watershed Stewards about them.



Cooking Demo at Jubilee Farm
by Karen Jurgenson of Baci Catering

Photo S. Kantor

High Tea at the Red Barn Country Inn

Sammamish Valley 4-H members served tea from their award winning Container Planting, the "Tea Pot." Attendees had the chance to learn about opportunities for discovery, growth, and fun through viewing a variety of 4-H project exhibits.

Go Local- Experience Your Puget Sound Foodshed!

PUBLICITY AND SPONSORSHIP

Over 25,000 Farm Tour brochures were widely distributed at libraries, community centers, farmers markets and various other public places and events during the months leading up to the Farm Tour. In addition to full size maps of each tour loop, the brochure included descriptions of each farm, tips on how to support local agriculture, fun farm-facts for kids and more.

This year newspaper advertisements accounted for more visitor draw than any other means, due to generous support by From the Heart of Washington. Other sponsors of the event included the King County Department of Natural Resources, King/Pierce County Farm Bureau, Pacific Northwest Bank, Sustainable Agriculture Network, Pioneer Organics, The Herbfarm Restaurant, Whole Foods, Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance, Seattle Tilth, Living Shelter Design, Colvos Creek Nursery, Hayes Nursery, Essential Baking, Thundering Hooves, Redhook Ale Brewery, Seattle's Best Coffee, Baci Catering and Café, Café Juanita, and Willows Lodge.

SUCCESS!

In 2002, 14% of people responding to Farm Tour questionnaires indicated they heard via word of mouth about the event. For 2003, that figure jumped to 25%, a strong indication that the event is making an impression on people and they are spreading the word. Below are just a few of the positive comments received from visitors.



Visitors go for a biodiesel-powered hay ride around Jubilee Farm

Photo S. Kantor

"We learned there are many more local sources for organic food products than we thought."

"There are alpacas in Western Washington!"

"This is a great way for city slickers to learn about agriculture!"

"We didn't know about many of the wool growers so close to home."

"The quantity and quality of land devoted to organic farming impressed me."

- Visitor comments, 2003 Harvest Celebration Farm Tour

Initiated by WSU's Small Farm Team in 1998, Harvest Celebration Day is now a regional event. Thirteen counties participated in 2003. WSU King County Extension is committed to Harvest Celebration Day for the unique opportunity it provides the community to reconnect with local farmers and food systems. We believe, given the chance to meet the farmers, walk their fields, or experience the delight on children's faces when they meet their first milk cow, people can decide for themselves whether King County farmland, a vanishing resource, is worth protecting and supporting.

For more information on King County's Harvest Celebration Farm Tour visit our webpage at www.metrokc.gov/wsu-ce/FarmTour or call 206-205-3206



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Kids learn to press their own cider at Fall City Farm
Photo S. Kantor